

Lilleshall School Governor's Report for 2019/20

The past school year has of course been an exceptional one. While the first third progressed normally, the final third took all of the skill of our Head Teacher, Senior Leadership Team and teaching teams to continue our pupils education with all the disruptions that the Covid-19 pandemic caused. These disruptions saw the school closed for all but key worker children from 23 March 2020, with Government selected year groups joining them only from June. The mass of children were therefore home schooled for the final third of the school year.

The school's Senior Leadership Team (SLT) had the challenging job of sifting through Government guidance, as this changed, in order to provide parents with the information they needed about children eligible to attend school. This enabled the school to avoid the confusion and mixed messages that went out from some other schools. Due to the reduced number of children and the need to keep everyone as safe as possible; the SLT developed a revised staffing structure and working timetable of attendance so that all teachers and teaching assistants continued to work and the breakfast and after school club – which offered much needed support to parents - continued. In order to support key worker parents, the school remained open during all of Easter, Bank Holidays and summer half term.

Lockdown measures also ensured that Governors also faced restricted access to school to perform their governance duties. While Lilleshall School is an outstanding school, it is the role of the Governing body to enable the school to continue in it's development and progression so that our pupils continue to receive the very best primary education. And conversely, this role was even more important this year. Our governing role in facilitating school improvement covers 4 main areas, our core functions remained throughout the year:

- Ensuring the School management has clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- The School's educational performance
- Ensuring financial resources are well spent.
- Ensuring statutory duties are met, the curriculum offer is appropriate and priorities approved

The Governing body is composed of 10 members, including myself as Chair, the Head Teacher, a Teaching Governor, co-opted Local Authority Governors and Parent Governors. As well as attending our formal meetings, each Governor has a focus on a particular subject area related to a key priority on our school development plan, for example: numeracy, art, safeguarding. It is a mark of the strength of the School and the commitment of Governors that we have continued year-on-year to have a stable and active Board with the vast majority of our Governors fulfilling their full terms of office. Indeed, many of our Governors demonstrate their commitment to the school by extending their terms of office beyond their tenure finish date.

Our governors comply with the statutory requirements to declare any conflicting business or work interests that could adversely impact upon the role and integrity of a school governor.

We review on an annual basis our skills set to ensure that as a group we have the key skills needed to fulfil our statutory obligations and that we are able to be effective governors. During this last academic year of 2019/20, we welcomed a new Parent Governor, Mr Neil Reeve, to our Governing Board.

The School is considered by **Telford and Wrekin Local Authority's performance indicators**, contained within its 'Securing School Improvement Policy', that the School is at category Level 1. This means that the School has been assessed as being 'self-improving' – though the actions taken by the Head Teacher, Senior Leadership Team and Governing Body – and has the potential to share effective practice with other schools. Our Head Teacher continues to have a formal role as an Attached Advisor to other local primary schools.

Governors are pleased to see that our Annual Summary Report to the Governing Body compiled by the **Severn Teaching School Alliance School Improvement Team** from visits by its attached adviser states that Lilleshall school demonstrates good practice in:

- Maintaining drive and passion to continue to ensure all pupils attain well. This level of commitment led by the Headteacher was exemplified during the Covid19 closure with the exceptional support provided for pupils by all staff;
- Providing an exciting and interesting curriculum and school environment for the pupils, leading to high levels of enjoyment;
- Pupils show pride in their efforts and their books, which are of a high quality;
- Joint working and sharing practice. Staff and governors work exceptionally well together, know the school and pupils well and openly share information for the benefit of the pupils.
- The school works productively with the local cluster of schools;
- A strong commitment to foundation subjects both linking with and supporting the whole curriculum, gaining awards in the arts, music and sport;
- Quality of teaching. Teachers plan highly engaging and challenging lessons supporting pupils to move forward in their learning.

Over the following pages I have reflected on our governing role and activities during the last academic year and the impact this has had on the quality of education and the curriculum, pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare and their academic performance, along with many adjustments the school had to make as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic.

Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction

In order to carry out our statutory duties we would normally meet formally as a group six times over the school year. Because of Covid 19 lock down and social distancing requirements, our last **Full Governors Board Meeting** where we formally review pupil progress and attainment through the Head Teachers Report; took place with a small cohort in the school hall, and with other Governors participating through video conferencing. This enabled Governors to actively question the Head teacher on the contents of her reports and consider her responses.

Our other formal meetings are:

Strategic Governors meetings which normally take place three times each year at the beginning of each term. During these we aim to review the work for the year and plan the activities and meetings each Governor will attend in order to fulfil our statutory duties of governance.

Formal **Sub Committees** which meet each term. We have two sub committees, composed of members of the Governing body, that play key roles in monitoring and evaluating progress in meeting targets of the School Development Plan and scrutinise aspects of school management and academic activity. These are:

- Progress, Achievement and Behaviour Committee.
- Finance, Health and Safety Committee

These termly committee meetings have enabled us to scrutinise specific areas of finance, pupil progress, use of the pupil premium grant for instance, so that committee members are well prepared for discussion and questioning in our full board meetings. Minutes of committee meetings are sent to all Governors and formally received at our full board meetings.

Likewise, our **Strategic Governors** meetings and **Sub Committees** meetings which are in addition to our full governor board meetings, and that fell in the summer term, were scheduled to be attendance/video conferencing.

In normal years' Governors will ensure that the vision, aims and values of the school are maintained through visits to the school for pupil workbook scrutinies, learning walks, attending Senior Leadership Team meetings and Staff Meetings, to name but a few. While Governor visits took place up until 23 March, after this time regular attendance at the school was of course not possible. To ensure Governors could still carry out their statutory governance role, as Chair of Governors I undertook to have regular communications with the Headteacher and update Governors regularly.

Governors scrutiny visits to school prior to national lockdown:

- whole Board attendance at school assembly to explain the role of Governors
- autumn term Parents Day
- review of Safeguarding Section 175/157
- attendance at the Problem Solving in Maths session
- session outlining the new Ofsted inspection framework.
- review of British Values (x2)
- maths lesson studies and book scrutinies
- attendance at pupil groups: School Council, Playground Pals, Eco Committee, Sports Ambassadors.
- review of playground safety
- attendance at KS1 Christmas production and Church Carol Concert
- meeting regarding Early Years action plan
- attendance at the Eat Well project session
- review of foundation subjects
- Mathematics Reasoning session
- PHSE Open Evening
- Local Authority Budget meeting
- School Performance and Development session

Covid 19 Pandemic Special Measures

There were specific measures (DfE Guidelines) that had to be carried out to ensure the safety of those pupils still attending school and school staff. Some of these required Governor oversight, and outcomes were communicated to all Governors:

- School closure on Friday 27 March 2020

- reviewing and signing off new Covid 19 specific risk assessments to ensure that all safety and infection control measures were in place – completed by Chair of Governors
- reviewing and signing off new Covid 19 specific addendum to the School Child Protection Safeguarding Policy to ensure that protection measures were in place – completed by Chair of Governors
- discussions with the Headteacher about specific communications to parents – completed by Chair of Governors

School policies

During this last year we again worked with the Head Teacher and teaching team to review, and amend where necessary, a number of important School policies to ensure they are current and relevant:

- Lilleshall School Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy (and later Covid 19 Addenda)
- Safeguarding Supervision
- Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance document
- Health & Safety Audit Checklist for Schools
- Mobile Phone Policy for Staff, Pupils and Parents
- Telford and Wrekin Safeguarding Partnership: Section 175/157 audit 2019/20 Lilleshall Primary School
- Personal Safety Policy
- Appraisal Policy
- Suicide Intervention Policy
- Capability Procedure
- Schools Emergency and Business Continuity Plan
- Peer on Peer Abuse Policy and Procedural Guidance
- Complaints Policy and Procedure
- School Equality Statement

The School's educational performance

The impact of the pandemic resulted in the 2020 national SATs tests for Year 6 Pupils being cancelled. Instead, school results this year are being compared to the national 2019 results. Pupil attainment has been established by practise test outcomes and teacher assessment. The school has maintained a rigorous scrutiny of teacher assessment. So that we are confident that, despite children not being able to complete the whole curriculum, the results awarded reflect pupils' true attainment.

The effectiveness of teaching – remote learning and face-to-face - has been demonstrated by the EYFS and Key Stage results for 2020 which show pupils performing well above the (2019) national figures for all subjects.

Progress

We have reviewed **pupils academic progress** regularly throughout the year within the Full Governors meetings and our Progress and Behaviour Committee where we scrutinise pupil's

progress in the core subjects of literacy, numeracy and science and monitor the progress of actions as part of the School Development Plan. Governors have reviewed data relating to the progress made by pupils as they progressed through their stage of learning, either the Early Years Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 or Key Stage 2 for each of the core subjects. Again, this year we have seen a good number of pupils making sustained (expected) or accelerated (greater than expected) progress. Governors are pleased that the majority of year groups have achieved the school ARE of 80% in all subjects at the end of the spring term.

Key Stage 2, Year 6 Results

Pupils academic achievement has again been excellent, with our pupils results again significantly higher than the national average in the core subjects of maths, writing, reading, spelling, punctuation & grammar and science. This was at both the expected standard of attainment and the higher standard of attainment. Governors are encouraged that these excellent attainment levels will stand Lilleshall pupils in good stead on their transition to their secondary schools.

Key Stage 1 Year 2 SATs results

Pupils attained more than the national average in their age related expectations in all subjects. The combined Reading, Writing and Maths results were 16% greater than the national average.

Key Stage 1 Year 1 Phonics results:

76% of pupils achieved the phonics standard.

Early Years Foundation Stage results:

Reception pupils attained the good level of development that was 10% greater than the national average. This result was also higher than the 2019 Early Years attainment.

Ensuring financial resources are well spent.

At Lilleshall Primary School the Senior Leadership team and Governors work together to carefully plan how we allocate our funding. This is through our governor's meetings and particularly through our Finance Committee.

The school's **pupil premium grant allocation** (PPG) was spent on activities and staffing that supported the learning of those children that were disadvantaged to ensure that all our pupils make progress and gaps in attainment close. Following Covid 19 lockdown 61% of PPG children were at home from March 2020, while 39% of PPG children accessed school following the return to school as key workers or vulnerable children. So that the positive impact we would normally see on our PPG pupils could not be as good this year.

PPG spend:

- An additional class teacher was employed and booster sessions were running in Year 6 and Y2 up until Covid 19 meant that schools were close
- The school has continued to employ an Early Intervention Worker to support pupils quickly and effectively with emotional and mental health areas of need.
- The Educational Welfare Officer continued to track attendance.
- Introduction of the Jigsaw programme – The mindful approach to PSHE.

- Additional support for PPG children who were working towards or not achieving their potential in Reading, Writing and Maths. This was provided by a mixture of TA support and fully qualified teacher support.
- SDP focus on ensuring that one in four lessons was experiential and hands on engaging children in active learning.
- Support for children with emotional needs has been given on a one to one basis as the needs were so diverse. The head teacher has supported a number of pupils over the year using specific resources linked to developing strategies for coping with stress and anxiety. All of these children have shown a positive response to this support and are developing strategies
- Additional 1-1 support for pupils before school to target specific areas of need where children find it challenging to work at home.
- Access to funded mathematics and literacy clubs in and beyond the school day. PPG pupils who attended the after-school clubs all made accelerated progress in that area.
- Talk It Tuesdays have been accessed by pupils for support and to share their issues and concerns. They are offered advice and support and strategies to help them move forward.

School PE and sports funding: Governors have been able to monitor how the sports funding the school receives is spent. This has included: specialist sports coaching, transport for pupils to attend sporting events, PE and playground equipment to support active playtimes, bicycle maintenance and activities to encourage walking to school. Of course these activities were severely disrupted during the last third of the school year due to the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic.

However, we have increased the percentage of pupils who can swim 25 metres unaided, can tread water and who can self-rescue by the time they leave at the end of Yr6 to 90%. Significantly, the school employs a PE sports leader to facilitate lunchtime activities. For three years the school has achieved Active Mark Gold and achieved Platinum in 2019. At break times pupils are engaged in quality experiences developing fine and gross motor control whilst being active.

A survey of Year 3 to Year 6 pupils on developing positive attitudes to PE showed that our pupils' attitudes to sports and physical activity are above national in all age groups and areas. It is particularly strong in the area of confidence with 61% agreeing strongly that they feel confident when exercising and playing sport, compared to 48% nationally

Ensuring statutory duties are met, the curriculum offer is appropriate, and priorities approved

The governing body approved the school's development plan for 2019/20 early in the academic year and carefully monitored its progression throughout the year to ensure that educational priorities were on track. As you would expect, our improvement priorities included some core subjects such as writing and numeracy. We had 6 key improvement priorities and progress was demonstrated in all of these until the national pandemic lockdown disrupted its further progression:

- 1) Upskilling the middle leaders to ensure pupils are taught the knowledge and skills in the curriculum effectively.
- 2) Greater Depth writers: Across the school examining the curriculum to identify where taught aspects are consistently applied by children.
- 3) To ensure quality problem solving and reasoning opportunities to increase outcomes in mathematics for all children including those aiming for greater depth at KS2.

- 4) To ensure that the attendance of pupils remains high with a particular focus on SEND and PPG pupils.
- 5) To ensure that British Values remains high profile across the school and children understand how these values impact on their everyday lives.
- 6) To recognise and support the development of good mental health enabling our children to be resilient in order to cope with all aspects of life and thrive.

The Annual Report to the Governing body Body compiled by the Severn Teaching School Alliance School Improvement Team states that: *'Pupils have the opportunity to take part in a wide range of interesting activities to enhance their learning'* and that, *'Staff use a range of creative teaching strategies to engage the pupils, ensure effective collaboration and make learning fun therefore engaging pupils'*.

Remote home learning

For about half of our pupils the final third of the school year meant learning remotely at home. This meant that our teachers had the double task of preparing learning materials for both classroom and distant learning. Pupils were able to access their class page on the school website and find advice on activities and learning materials. Teachers delivered the curriculum using the BBC Bitesize materials for English and maths along with phonics, spellings, foundation subjects and a daily read for everyone. Children were also able to communicate with teachers and each other by posting images of their home learning. Teachers updated the website for pupils regularly.

Governors were pleased to hear the positive message from HM Schools Inspectorate; praising Lilleshall's web-based home schooling offer, along with its personal support to parents and pupils. Teachers were in contact with pupils at home and chased those who were not regularly keeping contact. An email address for each class was set up. Teachers, parents and children used these to keep in touch and a register of contact was maintained. Any family that did not use this facility or make contact with the school was phoned twice by the teacher. Some pupils were provided with laptops from school to enable them to access the online learning materials. Our Vice Chair of Governors, Mrs Grass collated the "How's your learning going at home" questionnaire, the results of which were very positive about the work the school was providing for home schooling and the ongoing support.

Teachers sent out end of year reports to parents at the end of June showing predicted outcomes for pupils had they been able to remain in school. For some of these children; teachers have judged that the closure of school meant that their child's progress was less, and therefore attainment lower than if they had been able to attend school. Feedback to Governors from parents across year groups is that many were pleased at how personalised the school reports were and how difficult this must have been for teachers whose year was cut short with their pupils. Parents felt that the reports were honest and detailed, describing their individual child well and not solely focused on academic ability.

The Annual Report to the Governing body Body compiled by the Severn Teaching School Alliance School Improvement Team found that: *'Pupils benefit from exceptional levels of personalised support from staff who have in-depth knowledge of their needs. During the COVID19 closure they had frequent and regular contact, loved the phone discussions, the regular feedback about work and the personalized approaches'*.

Pupil attendance

Prior to the national lockdown school closure our pupils' attendance over the year was 97%. Consistent with previous years, there were no pupils excluded from the school.

From June 1st, Key Worker children were able to be joined in school by Year R and Year 1 pupils. Due to government infection control requirements that classes be no greater than 15 pupils, and that younger classes were to be prioritised over older years, the school was not able to accommodate our full Year 6. This was despite using all available space in classrooms, including the school hall.

Supporting the formal curriculum with extracurricular activities.

The opportunity for pupils to experience in school and out of school visits and trips and the experiential learning it facilitates is felt to be very supportive to pupil's holistic learning and contributes ideas and inspiration when developing other subject areas. The aim is for all year groups to have these opportunities.

This year, pupils varied visits that serve to support curricula topics, and physical and sporting activities, had to be curtailed due to the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic.

Year 6 outwards bound experience

As in previous years Pupils in Year 6 had the opportunity to experience a weeks' outwards bound at the Local Authority's Arthog Centre. The Head Teacher, Chair of governors and two other adult helpers attended for the week and helped facilitate activities. Fortunately, our Year 6 pupils chose November as had it been later in the school year, the Covid 19 pandemic would have meant it was cancelled. Educationists are already speaking of the loss to pupils' holistic learning and development from not participating in this important experiential learning. But for our pupils, over the week they had the experience of engaging in outdoor activities and learning new skills that challenged and stretched them; both physically and mentally. For many pupils this was the first time they had the opportunity to experience canoeing, rock climbing, mountain or gorge walking. There, pupils engaged in activities that fully embodied Lilleshall School's values of **Making My Learning Fly**:

- **Independence** – learning to be independent, taking responsibility and thinking for themselves.
- **Effort**- pupils put a significant amount of effort into the challenges of new and strenuous activities.
- **Challenge** – pupils embraced new challenges and learnt new skills such as canoeing and building sailable rafts. Pupils learnt how important listening carefully and working together could be.
- **Taking risks** – pupils had opportunities to try out new activities and stretch themselves.
- **Determination** – pupils found out how determination and team work could yield success.
- **Positive** – throughout their varied outdoor activities pupils demonstrated positive attitudes to overcoming significant challenges as they learned new skills. Even those children who were reluctant to participate in some activities, found significant positives during their time at Arthog.

Fundamental British Values observed: significant lesson learned over this week for all pupils was the importance of working together in a team, listening and taking instructions and that stretching and challenging themselves could give self-satisfaction. Pupils demonstrated values of mutual respect and helped those who were less confident or had greater learning needs. Pupils learned that working together yielded results.

As we have learned to expect at Lilleshall School, pupils were extremely well behaved during their time away and were a credit to their school, both during their time on outdoor activities and during their leisure time.

Governors believe that **British Values** in the school is an area of strength. One of our Governors, Mr Platt, takes a particular interest in this area. Values are introduced in Monday assemblies and displayed in classrooms enabling staff to focus on them during the week. British Values and social, moral, spiritual and cultural values are well planned for and developed.

Christine A Raper
Chair of Governors Lilleshall School